

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus to control a stepper motor to which a driving current is applied, the apparatus comprising:

a torque calculator to calculate torque applied to the stepper motor from the driving current flowing in each excited phase of the stepper motor and from stored driving current settings and to output a driving current setting signal corresponding to the calculated torque;

a controller to output a control signal to apply variable driving current which is based on the driving current setting signal, to the stepper motor; and

a driver to drive the stepper motor based on the control signal inputted from the controller.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a current detector to detect driving the current flowing into in each excited phase of the stepper motor and to output the detected driving current to the torque calculator.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the torque calculator comprises:

an A/D converter to convert the inputted driving current into digital signals;

a CPU to calculate the torque using information on the A/D converted driving current and to read driving current setting information corresponding to the calculated torque information; and

a D/A converter to convert the read driving current setting information into analog signals.

4. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:
a storage unit to store the driving current setting information corresponding to the calculated torque information therein.
5. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the storage unit stores the calculated torque information and the corresponding driving current setting information therein, causing the torque to be proportional to the driving current.
6. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the variable driving current varies according to a variation of the driving current setting signal inputted to the controller.
7. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the driver applies the variable driving current to the stepper motor according to the control signal inputted from the controller to drive the stepper motor.
8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the torque calculator converts the detected driving current inputted from the current detector to calculate the torque applied to the stepper motor.
9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the CPU calculates a magnitude of the torque applied to the stepper motor using information on an amount of current flowing in each excited phase of the stepper motor.
10. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the magnitude of the torque applied to the stepper motor is proportional to the driving current setting signal.
11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the variable driving current is proportional to a magnitude of the torque applied to the stepper motor, so that a torque margin is maintained in a constant state.
12. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a stepper motor to which a driving current is applied, the method comprising:

outputting a driving current setting signal corresponding to torque applied to the stepper motor, the torque being computed from the driving current flowing in each excited phase of the stepper motor and from stored driving current setting information;

outputting a driving control signal to apply variable driving current to the stepper motor based on the driving current setting signal; and

driving the stepper motor based on the driving control signal.

13. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein the outputting of the signal corresponding to the torque applied to the stepper motor comprises:

detecting the driving current flowing in each excited phase of the stepper motor;

A/D converting the driving current detected in each excited phase;

calculating the torque based on information on the driving current;

reading the driving current setting information corresponding to the calculated torque information; and

D/A converting the driving current setting information and outputting the D/A converted information.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the driving current setting signal causes the driving current to be applied to the stepper motor in proportion to the torque applied to the stepper motor.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a stepper motor to which a driving current is applied, the method comprising:

calculating torque applied to the stepper motor from the driving current flowing in each excited phase of the stepper motor and from stored driving current settings and outputting a driving current setting signal corresponding to the calculated torque;

outputting a control signal to apply variable driving current which is based on the driving current setting signal, to the stepper motor; and

driving the stepper motor based on the control signal inputted from the controller.